

EVENTS OF THE WEEK OVERSEAS

The New German Cabinet.

ALTHOUGH Dr. Wirth's ministry was able to secure a majority on the ultimatum issue, his cabinet is generally regarded as a makeshift which has been given a short lease of life for the purpose of accepting the entente demands but which cannot continue to hold the confidence of the Reichstag. The principal parties from the extreme Right to the extreme Left are: The German National party, which is conservative, monarchist, pan-German and anti-Semitic; the German People's party, composed of middle class industrialists and dominated by Stinnes—anti-Semitic; the Democrats—containing many professional people and Jews; the Centrist or Catholic Clericals—a powerful minority with monarchist tendencies; the Majority Socialists, the first party of the Left, composed of trade unionists, led by conservative Socialists like Ebert, Scheidemann and Mueller; the Independent Socialists—more radical than the Majority Socialists; and at the extreme Left the Communists.

The new cabinet contains four Centrists including the chancellor, Dr. Wirth, two Democrats, five Majority Socialists and one nonparty man, Gen. Groener. The German People's party, which had four portfolios in the Fehrenbach cabinet, is not represented in the new one.

As Dr. Wirth's cabinet can count on only about 215 of the total 469 votes in the Reichstag, its ability to survive will depend on whether it can win the support of either the People's party on the Right or the Independent Socialists on the Left. Neither party is likely to give its support, as the cabinet is too conservative for the Independent Socialists and Dr. Wirth is not in the good graces of Stinnes and the big business men of the People's party. Furthermore, an alliance with Stinnes would be too much for the Majority Socialists to swallow. So long as the center parties combined have not votes enough to withstand a combination of the parties on the two extremes a stable government is practically out of the question. A compromise may be reached similar to that which sustained the Fehrenbach ministry whereby one party adopts a policy of benevolent neutrality which prevents the formation of an opposition strong enough to defeat the ministry. The party assuming this neutrality obviously holds the balance of power and by threat of going over to the opposition can exert the greatest pressure on the government. This role might be sufficiently attractive to Stinnes to influence him to permit his party to adopt such a policy and to suffer the Socialists and Centrists to direct affairs, at least nominally, as long as they behaved themselves.

Dr. Wirth's cabinet is not yet complete, as the important office of minister of foreign affairs, held temporarily by the chancellor, is yet to be filled. It is conceded by the Socialists that this office should be held either by a member of a bourgeois party or by a nonparty man. Other countries, especially America, it is believed, would not look with favor upon a Socialist as foreign minister.

The Aland Islands Decision.

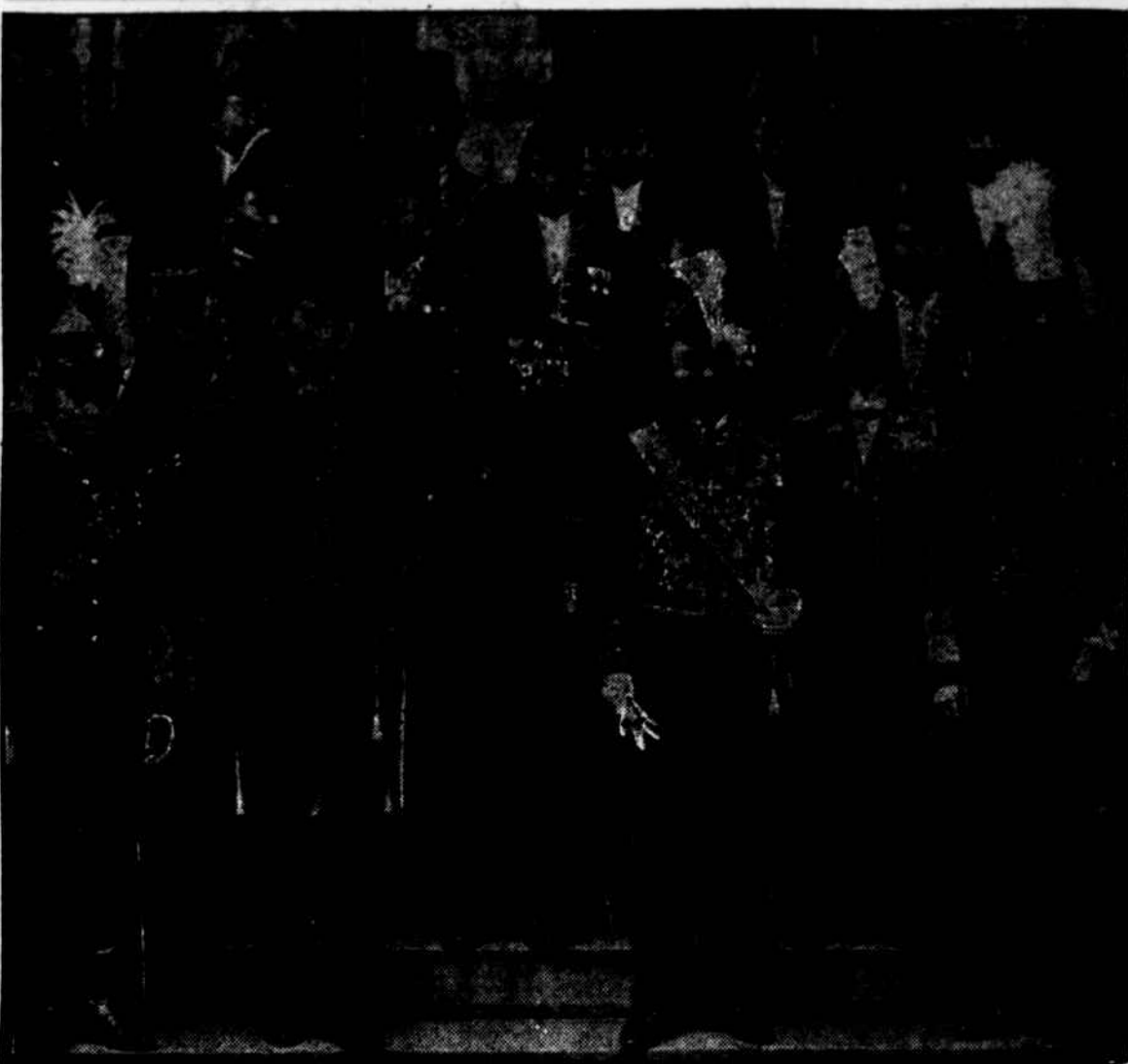
ANNOUNCEMENT has just been made that the commission appointed by the league of nations to arbitrate the dispute between Sweden and Finland regarding the possession of the Aland Islands has rendered its decision by which the islands are awarded to Finland without recourse to a plebiscite. The commission, which has investigated the question and rendered its decision, is composed of Abram I. Elkus, former United States Ambassador to Turkey; M. Calonder, former President of the Swiss Confederation, and Baron Beyens, of Belgium.

These islands, which have been the subject of controversy since 1917 when Finland declared its independence of Russia, consist of eighty inhabited and a number of smaller uninhabited islands, situated about halfway between Sweden and Finland at the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia. Of the total population, about 22,000, over 95 per cent are Swedish speaking. In 1808 the Alands and Finland belonged to Sweden, but in this year the Finnish provinces were seized by Russia, and the Aland Islands went to Russia with Finland. From that time until 1917 these islands were considered part of the province of Finland, at which time, however, the people of the islands declared their independence of Russia and expressed their desire to become a part of Sweden. A few months later Finland declared its independence and claimed the islands as part of its territory.

Although it is admitted that a plebiscite would result in a victory for Sweden, it is contended by Finland that the inhabitants of the islands are not a separate racial group but are part of the Swedish population of Finland, which constitutes 11 per cent of the total population. In rendering its decision the league of nations' commission has indorsed the positions of Finland, but has imposed certain conditions by which the Finnish government must guarantee to the islanders the right of preserving Swedish culture and language. The decision amounts practically to autonomy to the islands under Finnish sovereignty.

The Alands have never become important com-

Diplomats Call on President



RESPLENDENT in dress uniform, this distinguished group of Japanese, consisting of Baron Kijuro Shidehara, Ambassador to the United States, and his staff, recently paid a diplomatic visit to the President. They are shown on the steps of the embassy, Baron Shidehara stands second from the right in the front row.

mercially, but they possess harbors which could be easily developed. Strategically they are regarded as of great importance to Sweden, Finland and Russia. The latter country, it is said, will not recognize any settlement which does not give the islands either to Sweden or Russia.

New Strike Menace in England.

THE DECISION of British transport workers to refuse to handle imported coal has again brought upon England the menace of a general strike. The transport workers declare that foreign coal is being brought into the country merely for the purpose of starving out the miners in order to force them to accede to the terms of the government and the mine owners. The transport men say that their decision is based merely on the desire to bring about a fair settlement of the coal controversy. The government, on the other hand, has announced that it will continue to import coal for essential industries, and that if the transport workers refuse to handle it, the government will assume that responsibility. Attempts have been made to persuade the railwaymen to join the transport workers in their refusal to handle foreign coal, but so far the railwaymen have refused to be drawn into this dispute. Labor leaders realize that it is dangerous policy to call additional strikes at this time when there are some 4,000,000 men either out of employment or on reduced time and when the government is able to secure all the men it needs to combat the strike. The financial condition of the workers and the unions is another consideration which influences the leaders to go slowly. The situation, nevertheless, is critical and the action which is taken by labor executives at meetings during this week-end is likely to determine whether England is again to be faced with an industrial struggle as serious as that which was so narrowly averted a month ago.

THE reforms instituted in Russia by Lenin a few months ago are already having their effects. The workmen and peasants whose discontent was the principal cause for Lenin's new policy have responded to it. There is less discontent, and large numbers of persons who were formerly traders are seeking permits to indulge in free trading.

The reforms have not, however, had the same effect on that section of the Communists most closely identified with the Third Internationale. They continue their advocacy of a policy which would devote a greater proportion of the energies of their party to the world revolution than to the rehabilitation of Russia.

The Italian Elections.

DURING the past week the political campaign in Italy preceding the general elections which take place today has surpassed previous weeks in violence. The Fascisti movement, which has been organized by the middle classes for the purpose of combating the Socialists and Communists, appears to have been gaining ground. This organization has been extended throughout all parts of Italy, and under the leadership of former officers and followers of D'Annunzio it has imposed a strict internal discipline upon its members. In fighting its opponents it is, however, employing the same methods of violence which have been universally condemned. Its policy has been theoretically one of retaliation rather than aggression. The distinction, however, is very slight, and to judge from reports the Fascisti have been able to surpass their opponents in violence.

The organization of this society has appealed to the imagination of the Italian people, and through this and through the tacit if not the open support of government officers, it has increased in influence and power to such an extent that the elections are expected to result in a decisive defeat of Liberal and Socialist parties. Premier Giolitti will perhaps have a more formidable majority in Parliament, but that factor alone will by no means solve Italy's serious industrial problems.

Notes of Foreign News.

The governments of the nations which are members of the league of nations have been summoned by Senhor Gastao da Cunha, Brazilian ambassador to France and acting president of the council of the league, to send delegates to the second session of the assembly, which will begin at Geneva on Monday, September 25. The provisional agenda for this session include a number of reports which have been made by special commissions appointed by the last assembly, such as the reduction of armaments, communications and transit, opium, traffic in women and children, typhus, and international health. At this session of the assembly the judges of the permanent court of international justice will be elected in case the majority of the league members have ratified the protocol regarding the court before the opening of the session. It is expected that between now and September a great many additions will be made to the agenda which are more important than the subjects already announced.